

STATE OF COLORADO

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

130 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
Phone: (303) 866-2087
www.colorado.gov/ltgovernor/



Jane E. Norton
Lieutenant Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

August 26, 2004

CONTACT: Amber O'Connor

303-866-3125

NORTON ANNOUNCES ADOPTION REFORMS

Lieutenant Governor Jane Norton Announces Recommendations of "Lieutenant Governor's Committee to Promote Adoption" for Action

(DENVER) – Lieutenant Governor Jane Norton today released the report from the *Lieutenant Governor's Committee to Promote Adoption*.

In an effort to find a home for the more than 700 children currently in foster care in Colorado, Norton formed *The Lieutenant Governor's Committee to Promote Adoption*. The Committee met for six months to examine what actions needed to occur to promote Colorado adoptions, collaborate with adoption services, state agencies and county departments to support adoptive parents, and make the process more accessible and easier to achieve. In doing so, the Committee recommendations call for legislative, judicial, regulatory, public and private sector action.

"For a child waiting on having their own family, even the smallest delay can seem like a lifetime. With these recommendations, our goal is that taking these actions will end the days of our Colorado children "aging out" of the system without ever having a family of their own," said Norton."

The primary directive of the committee was to review pertinent laws, regulations, judicial procedures, and other support systems that impact the state's adoption system. The committee determined what barriers impede timely adoptions and made specific recommendations to improve the system.

The committee also provided recommendations that prospective adoptive families be provided with statewide, centralized assistance regarding the adoption process, both pre and post-adoption.

-more-

Using the theme, *Strengthening Colorado Families-One Child at a Time*, the committee developed recommendations for a public relations and educational campaign to increase awareness of a child's need for a permanent home, to recruit permanent families, to dispel adoption myths, and to promote adoption.

The Lieutenant Governor's Committee to Promote Adoption consists of highly diverse professionals including adoption organizations, the state department of human services, county departments of social services directors, a mental health professional, adoptive parents and an adoptee, faith-based organizations, adoption associations, judicial and legal experts, the Governor's director of policy and initiatives, and staff from the Lieutenant Governor's office.

Norton expressed appreciation to the Committee for their time over the past six months to make this report possible. To view a complete copy of the Committee's report, visit Norton's Web site at www.colorado.gov/ltgovernor

Jane Norton was sworn in as Colorado's 46th Lieutenant Governor on January 13, 2003. Her responsibilities include serving as the chair of the Colorado Commission of Indian Affairs; acting as point person for the Owens Administration on health insurance reform; strengthening families by promoting adoption, early childhood care and education efforts/initiatives, mentoring and volunteerism; and serving as Colorado's delegate to the Aerospace States Association.

###